



Learning and Support Services

Administrative Center Annex
500 North Central Avenue
Eureka, MO 63025-1203

636.733.2151
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fredericksonmatt@rockwood.k12.mo.us

Dr. Matthew Frederickson

Director of Curriculum

February 21, 2012

Dr. Charles N. Davis
University of Missouri
Missouri School of Journalism
Journalism Studies Department
204 Neff Hall
Columbia, MO 65211

Dear Dr. Davis:

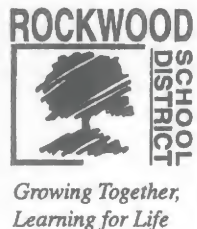
Thank you for your Sunshine Law request regarding challenged and/or removed materials in school libraries and/or classrooms in our district from January 1, 2008 to present. I attach all correspondence currently available to us regarding this process and a DRAFT form we have developed to enable patrons to utilize when challenging materials.

As you can see, we do not have records of challenged materials beyond one patron comment to our Board of Education presented in person on 15 September 2009. Subsequently, we began development of a process for formal challenges to materials, but the document is still in DRAFT form. Recently, our district went through a complete Reorganization in the district administration office, and it is my goal to have this document in a final format very soon. As you can see, it is much more thorough than the Boone County example you provided. We have a separate process for reviewing suggested books, but that is not specifically a challenge process that would lead to removal of a currently adopted resource.

I received your correspondence on 15 February 2012, and my secretary left a voice mail for you at approximately 1450 hours on that day. Today is the third business day since I received your letter, and plan to fax our response to you immediately. I will follow with regular UPS mail. Please confirm receipt via email: fredericksonmatt@rockwood.k12.mo.us.

Sincerely,

Matthew Frederickson, Ph.D.
Director of Curriculum



Administrative Center

111 East North Street
Eureka, MO 63025-1229

636.938.2205
636.938.2251 Fax
larsoncraig@rockwood.k12.mo.us

Craig H. Larson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

October 28, 2009

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Chesterfield, MO 63005


Dear Ms. [REDACTED]

Thank you for taking time to share with the Board your concerns about the book, *Thirteen Reasons Why*. The passage you read aloud certainly illustrates the dramatic and graphic nature of the language in the book. The Board and administrative staff do question whether the book should be required reading in any class and have informed teachers that it can not be used with an entire class in the future.

Thirteen Reasons Why is a popular book that is designed to help teens understand the pressures that lead to teen suicide (the greatest killer of teens in America) and encourages teens to support each other to avoid letting a friend choose suicide rather than seeking help. The value of the book's message, however, does not over shadow the impact of its graphic language on the book's use within the curriculum. Parents could give permission for their son or daughter to read the book as a supplemental part of a class

Again, thank you for highlighting a problem that needed attention and resolution. I understand from Dr. Seiber that the book was discussed in a workshop and inappropriately placed on a list of available supplementary materials without appropriate oversight or review, which was a mistake.

Sincerely,


Craig H. Larson, Ed.D
Superintendent

C: Karen Seiber
High School Principals
Board of Education

Rockwood School District • Board of Education
PATRON COMMENT CARD

As per Policy BDDI revised by the Board of Education on February 15, 1996, citizens wishing to make statements to the Board shall "sign in on cards provided by the Board prior to the start of the Patron Comment agenda item." The full text of the policy on "Public Participation at Board Meetings" is printed on the reverse side of this card.

Any resident of the Rockwood School District wishing to present a comment or question is asked to complete the information below. The card will then be collected prior to the start of the Patron Comment agenda item. An individual submitting a card will be recognized for his/her public comment by the Board President. At that time the individual is asked to go to the lectern and speak. The lectern has a microphone which will allow both the Board and the audience to hear the question/comment more clearly.

Board Meeting Date 10-15-09
Name [REDACTED]
Address [REDACTED] Chesterfield mo 63005
Phone (Home) [REDACTED] (Work) [REDACTED]
Comment/Question (Please provide a short written description of the topic you wish to address.)
Book in curriculum

Reconsideration Procedure Rockwood School District

When a concern is registered regarding materials being used in a building, the principal should meet with the parent and attempt to resolve the concern. If the concern cannot be resolved at the building level, the reconsideration procedure should be utilized as a final step in the resolution of the concern. Informal discussion with the challenger must be held before formal reconsideration procedures are initiated. After review by the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, a decision will be made whether to remove materials from the shelves during the reconsideration process. Procedures to be followed when materials are to be reconsidered:

1. A Request for Reconsideration of Media form must be obtained from the school library media specialist.
2. The completed form must be submitted to the principal, must be signed, and must include the specific information requested.
3. A review committee will be appointed by the principal, consisting of the building principal, media specialist (from a school other than where the material is being challenged), a classroom teacher (from a team other than where the material is being challenged), Director of Curriculum, and appropriate curriculum coordinator. The committee will be chaired by the principal.
4. The committee will meet and complete the appropriate form.
5. The committee will present their decision within ten working days to the complainant and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.
6. The committee will file a copy of the recommendation with the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.
7. Appeals from the decision of the committee may be made to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
ROCKWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

School _____

Type of
Material _____

Title _____

Author _____

Publisher/Producer _____

Request Initiated By _____

Complainant Represents: _____ Yes _____ No _____ Himself/Herself

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Organization of group. If yes,
name of group or organization.

Are you a resident of the Rockwood School District? _____ Yes _____ No

Do you have a child attending a Rockwood School? _____ Yes _____ No

The following questions are to be answered after the complainant has read, viewed, or listened to the material in its entirety. If sufficient space is not provided, attach additional sheets. Please sign your name to each additional attachment.

1. Have you read/viewed/listened to this material in its entirety?
2. How did this item come to your attentions?
3. To what in the material do you object? (please be specific, cite pages, frames, film sequence, etc.)

4. If the material was brought home by your child, which of the following apply?
_____ assignment _____ free selection _____ from a friend _____ other
5. Is item part of a set or series? _____ Yes _____ No If yes, did you read, view, or listen to the entire set or series? _____ Yes _____ No
6. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of the material?
7. What do you feel might be the result of a student's using the material?
8. What are the positive aspects of this material?
9. What educational merit does this material have?
10. For what age group would you recommend this material?
11. Would you care to recommend other school library material of the same subject and format as a replacement for this material?
12. What would you like your media center/school to do about this material?

Do not assign it to my child
Keep the material on the shelf, but I will ask my child not to borrow the material
Withdraw it from all students as well as my child
Allow limited access to this material only with parental permission

Signature of complainant _____

Date _____

Please return completed form to the school principal.

**CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL RECONSIDERATION COMMITTEE'S REVIEW OF
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL
FICTION**

Title _____

Author _____

A. Purpose

1. What is the purpose, theme, or message of the material? How well does the author/producer accomplish this purpose?

2. Will the reading and/or viewing of material result in a more compassionate understanding of the human beings? _____ Yes _____ No

3. Does it offer an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the aspirations, achievements, and problems of various minority groups? _____ Yes _____ No

B. Content

1. When factual information is part of the story, is it presented accurately?

_____ Yes _____ No

2. Are concepts presented appropriate to the ability and maturity of the potential reader?

_____ Yes _____ No

3. Do characters speak in a language true to the period and section of the country in which they live? _____ Yes _____ No

4. Does the material offend in some special way the sensibilities of women or minority group by the way it presents either the chief character or any of the minor characters?

_____ Yes _____ No

5. If there is use of offensive language, is it appropriate to the purpose of the text?

_____ Yes _____ No

6. Are the illustrations appropriate and in good taste? _____ Yes _____ No

7. Are the illustrations realistic in relation to the story? _____ Yes _____ No

**CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL RECONSIDERATION COMMITTEE'S REVIEW OF
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL
NON-FICTION**

Title _____

Author _____

A. Purpose

1. What is the overall purpose or theme of the material?

2. Is the purpose accomplished? Yes _____ No _____

B. Authenticity

1. Is the author competent and qualified in the field? Yes _____ No _____

2. What is the reputation and significance of the author and publisher/producer in the field?

3. Is the material up-to-date? Yes _____ No _____

4. Are any information sources well documented? Yes _____ No _____

5. Are translations or retellings faithful to the original? Yes _____ No _____

C. Appropriateness

1. Does the material promote the educational goals and objectives of the curriculum of the district schools? Yes _____ No _____

2. Is it appropriate to the level of instruction intended? Yes _____ No _____

3. Are any illustrations appropriate to the subject and age levels? Yes _____ No _____

C. Review

1. Source of review _____

Favorably reviewed _____ Unfavorable reviewed _____

2. Does this title appear in one or more reputable selection aids? _____ Yes _____ No

If the answer is yes, please list titles of the selection aids. _____

Additional Comments

Recommendations by the Committee for Treatment of the Challenged Materials

Signature of Media Review Committee

Date _____

D. Content

1. Is the content of the material well presented by providing adequate scope, range, depth, and continuity? ____ Yes ____ No
2. Does this material present information not otherwise available? ____ Yes ____ No
3. Does this material give a new dimension or direction to its subject? ____ Yes ____ No

E. Review

1. Source of Review _____

Favorably reviewed _____ Unfavorably reviewed _____

2. Does this title appear in one or more reputable selection aids? ____ Yes ____ No

If the answer is yes, please list titles of the selection aids. _____

Additional Comments

Recommendations by Committee for Treatment of the Challenged Materials

Signatures of Review Committee

Date _____

Jodie Arand

From: Connie Connon
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2012 10:22 AM
To: Jodie Arand; Matthew Frederickson
Cc: Stefanie Steffan; Gretchen Moorman; Connie Connon
Subject: RE: Challenged books-need response by EOD 2/16

It is not unusual for librarians to have discussions with parents about reading and reading materials but we have not had anything that goes beyond general discussion about materials and personal reading choices for students. The only case I can remember is the issue with THIRTEEN REASONS WHY which came up a couple of years ago. However, that issue was resolved without my involvement because it was related to LA not the Library.

We do have a reconsideration policy *Library Policies and Regulations* that has been in place for many years. It can be found on the INSIDER, Curriculum, Library Media, Library Documents, and Reconsideration Process Draft. I might add that it is labeled draft because the last review of the policy added the step-by-step process for the implementation of a challenge (Pages 1 & 2), not because the actual form was changed (pages 3-15). We were in the process of reviewing this process with Carrie Lutrell but the project was stalled.

After looking at BOE Regulation 6241 - Challenged Materials, it seems that it would be a good idea to review all related processes, forms, etc. to provide a united policy for all questions district wide.

-----Original Message-----

From: Jodie Arand
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 2:28 PM
To: Connie Connon; Gretchen Moorman; Stefanie Steffan
Cc: Matthew Frederickson; Jodie Arand
Subject: Challenged books-need response by EOD 2/16
Importance: High

Hello.

Please see attached request for records pertaining to the challenge and/or removal of materials in school libraries and/or classrooms in our district from January 1, 2008 to present.

Please respond to me and cc: Matt with your information by end of day tomorrow, 2/16.

Gretchen and Stefanie - Matt realizes you may need to reach out to others to help gather this information since you are new to your position.

Thanks very much.

-Jodie

-----Original Message-----

From: B205Copier [<mailto:B205Copier@rsd.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 5:20 PM
To: Jodie Arand
Subject: Scanned from MFP-04426472 02/15/2012 15:19

Scanned from MFP-04426472.

Date: 02/15/2012 15:19

Pages:2

Resolution:200x200 DPI

Jodie Arand

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Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 2:28 PM
To: Connie Connon; Gretchen Moorman; Stefanie Steffan
Cc: Matthew Frederickson; Jodie Arand
Subject: Challenged books-need response by EOD 2/16
Attachments: DOC021512.pdf

Importance: High

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Resolution:200x200 DPI

Please do not reply to this message.

Jodie Arand

From: Matthew Frederickson
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 9:07 PM
To: Gretchen Moorman; Jodie Arand; Connie Connon; Stefanie Steffan
Subject: Re: Challenged books-need response by EOD 2/16

Do we have documentation of this past process? I wonder if we could compile books that were reviewed and what answer given?

----- Original Message -----

From: Gretchen Moorman
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 02:51 PM
To: Jodie Arand; Connie Connon; Stefanie Steffan
Cc: Matthew Frederickson
Subject: RE: Challenged books-need response by EOD 2/16

Hi All,

As far as I know, we do not have a challenged or removal list of books used in the libraries/classrooms. However, in Rockwood, when teachers want to use a new piece that directly ties to curriculum, they have to complete a Rockwood Literature Review/Request form. The form asks teachers to identify the reading level, genre, how the book enhances the curriculum, and controversial topics or language. Two teachers read the piece, , complete the form, and submit the form to me. I read the text and approve or disapprove the book. This process is followed for all whole class reads where there is direct instruction to the text and for literature circles/novel of choice pieces when students choices are limited. When approving a book, I do consider literary merit, message to audience, authenticity of text, genre, and awards/recognition. In addition, I look at the Controversial and Challenging Books in School site, which was created by parents and I research texts on the National Council of English Teachers site. I have attached the form for you.

Thanks,
Gretchen

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Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 2:28 PM
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Date: 02/15/2012 15:19
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Resolution:200x200 DPI

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Jodie Arand

From: Stefanie Steffan
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2012 7:54 AM
To: Matthew Frederickson; Gretchen Moorman; Jodie Arand; Connie Connon
Subject: RE: Challenged books-need response by EOD 2/16

I will be in Fenton all morning at Stanton and Uthoff. I won't be back here until 1:00. I sent an e-mail out to all RI teachers yesterday. So far none of them are aware of any challenged books.

Stefanie Steffan
Pre-k through 5th grade Literacy Facilitator Rockwood School District
Phone: 636-733-2146
Fax: 636-938-2365

-----Original Message-----

From: Matthew Frederickson
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 9:07 PM
To: Gretchen Moorman; Jodie Arand; Connie Connon; Stefanie Steffan
Subject: Re: Challenged books-need response by EOD 2/16

Do we have documentation of this past process? I wonder if we could compile books that were reviewed and what answer given?

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Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 02:51 PM
To: Jodie Arand; Connie Connon; Stefanie Steffan
Cc: Matthew Frederickson
Subject: RE: Challenged books-need response by EOD 2/16

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Gretchen

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Pages:2

Resolution:200x200 DPI

Please do not reply to this message.

Jodie Arand

From: Paula Miller
Sent: Thursday, February 16, 2012 10:53 AM
To: Jodie Arand
Cc: Matthew Frederickson; Connie Connon
Subject: Ridge Meadows Challenged Library Books Information

I haven't had a library book challenged in the 13 years I've been at Ridge Meadows.

Paula Miller
Librarian
Ridge Meadows Elementary
777 Ridge Road
Ellisville, MO 63021
636.891.6650